

VZCZCXRO9266  
RR RUEHPOD  
DE RUEHVJ #0464 1041140  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 141140Z APR 09  
FM AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0033  
RUEHPS/AMEMBASSY PRISTINA 0180  
RUEHPOD/AMEMBASSY PODGORICA 0059  
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB 0602  
RUEHTI/AMEMBASSY TIRANA 0166  
RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 0078  
RUEHSF/AMEMBASSY SOFIA 0061  
RUEHLJ/AMEMBASSY LJUBLJANA 0108  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0179  
RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA 0325  
RUEHSQ/AMEMBASSY SKOPJE 0295  
RUEHPNH/NVC PORTSMOUTH 0025

UNCLAS SARAJEVO 000464

DEPT FOR CA/EX, CA/FPP, CA/VO, AND EUR/SCE (MIKE FOOKS); DEPT ALSO PASS TO KCC; POSTS FOR FRAUD PREVENTION MANAGERS; VIENNA FOR DHS MARLA BELVEDERE; DEPT ALSO PASS TO DHS SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KFRD](#) [CVIS](#) [CMGT](#) [CPAS](#) [ASEC](#) [BK](#)

SUBJECT: Half of Bosnian Au-pairs remain in America

**¶1.** [Summary] Sarajevo FPU recently completed a validation study for all J1 au-pair cases Post issued in 2006. Nearly half of the program participants from Bosnia found legal ways to stay in the USA. [End Summary]

**¶2.** Methodology: FPU examined cases from 2006 to provide ample time for return to Bosnia. Of Post's 228 cases in this study, only five were male. Our FPU unit primarily made telephone calls to the au-pairs' homes, but also made some visits to the houses of several applicants in the cities of Sarajevo, Tuzla and Banja Luka. SEVIS checks, as well as ADIS reports were also used as needed in the study.

**¶3.** Findings: Of the 228 issuances, 108(47.5%) of the participants stayed in America, 118 (51.6%) returned to Bosnia, and two visa recipients did not travel at all. Of those that remained in the U.S., 58 (25.5%) are now F1 students, 32 (14%) were married and received LPR status, while for 12 (5.3%), FPU could not determine any clear status. We believe these individuals are probably illegally in the U.S. An additional four applicants had pending applications requesting student status and two applicants had pending cases for visa extensions.

**¶4.** Of the returnees, 55 (24.1%) returned after finishing their original one year stay, 26 (11.4%) returned after two years (they extended Au-pair status in America for an additional one year), 15 (6.6%) returned after spending between one and two years (the majority closer to two years), 16(7%) returned after staying less than a year, while 4(1.8%) came back to Bosnia after having overstayed.

**¶5.** Most of the participants in Bosnia were from the Federation (70%), 29% were from Republic of Srpska and 1% from the Brcko District. There were few applicants from the Herzegovina region in the Federation, or from cities other than Banja-Luka and Doboij in the Republika Srpska.

**¶6.** (Comment) Post is aware that the total number of Au-pairs issued in Sarajevo is modest compared with other posts in the region. However, the surprisingly high percentage of those remaining in the US raises some concerns. Are local agencies coaching and advising individuals that the Au-pair program is a way to indirectly receive immigration benefits and circumvent likely ineligibilities as visitors? Furthermore, a very high percentage of the Au pairs who became students are receiving support from their former host families. Many of these students may be working unofficially, long after their Au-pair status has expired. Finally, are these dismal

return rates (even though the vast majority are legally present in the USA) a natural function of an age group that is likely to study and marry, or is the spirit of the au-pair program being breached?  
(End Comment)

¶7. Our consular officers will continue to monitor these concerns. We plan to follow these trends in future validation studies.

CEFKIN